

## **Mario Williams Visits 2013 'M&T Bank Touchdown for Teachers' Grand Prize Winner** **Local teacher awarded visit from Williams and \$1,000 grant**

Buffalo Bills defensive end Mario Williams visited the classroom today of 2013 Buffalo Bills and M&T Bank Touchdown for Teachers grand prize winner Patrick Wirth at Union Pleasant Elementary School in Hamburg, N.Y.

The fifth annual M&T Bank Touchdown for Teachers program honored Wirth among a group of western New York teachers named as finalists for their outstanding service to their schools and communities. Honorees were chosen based on their amount of involvement in the school or community, degree of positive impact on the school or community and their demonstrated commitment to education.

Wirth, a 4th grade teacher at Union Pleasant Elementary School, goes above and beyond to inspire each individual student through personalized education plans and strives to show students that learning is a year-round, lifelong process and above all is fun. As the head of the technology program at his school, he constantly looks for new and interesting ways to integrate technology into learning. His interactive classroom website gets thousands of hits from all over the world and serves as a portal for his students to view and share work with their peers around the globe.

Each year, his class runs the Bulldogs Pencil Shop, charging a small amount from staff and students for school supplies to benefit communities in need, from the hurricane-stricken Staten Island-area after Hurricane Sandy to Kigali, Rwanda. Wirth also teaches master's classes at Canisius College and voluntarily coordinates, supervises and teaches students through the Canisius for Kids (C4K), an interdisciplinary summer camp for children of various backgrounds looking to explore the culture and history of Buffalo in a nontraditional learning environment. As he dares his students to dream big and impact the world, his attitude is infectious and inspires both students and coworkers alike.

"Being able to recognize a talented and dedicated teacher like Patrick Wirth is an honor for the Buffalo Bills," said Bruce Popko, Bills Chief Revenue Officer. "Working together with M&T Bank on our M&T Bank Touchdown for Teachers program allows us the ability to showcase the outstanding educators we have in western New York."

"Education plays an important role in the future of our community and we're delighted to team up with the Buffalo Bills to honor Patrick Wirth for providing extra opportunities for his students to learn in a diverse and changing world. His ability to integrate technology into his teaching and inspire students to become lifelong learners has made a difference for many kids at Union Pleasant Elementary in Hamburg and we congratulate Mr. Wirth and all the great teachers who were nominated for this award," said Tim McMorrow, M&T Bank Group VP for Retail Banking in western New York.

As part of his grand prize, Wirth received a \$1,000 dollar grant for Union Pleasant Elementary School from M&T Bank and the Buffalo Bills.

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